

Sumter County  
Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)  
Of the Comprehensive Plan

Work Plan

October 1, 2008

Sumter County Division of Planning & Development  
Planning Services Department

2009 is a critical year in planning for the future of Sumter County. In 2009, the Planning Department will be preparing the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) to the Sumter County Comprehensive Plan, which is required to be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners by January 1, 2010.

Section 163.3191, Florida Statutes, require, "each local government shall adopt an evaluation and appraisal report (EAR) once every seven years assessing the progress in implementing the local government's comprehensive plan." The EAR evaluates how successful the County has been in addressing major community land use planning issues through implementation of our comprehensive plan. Based on this evaluation, the EAR suggests how the plan should be revised to better address community objectives, changing conditions and trends affecting the county, and changes in state requirements.

The EAR process is comprised of four (4) primary tasks:

1. Identification of Issues of Local Concern
2. Statutory Mandated Analysis
3. Issues of Local Concern Analysis
4. EAR Review and Adoption

In order to meet the required adoption date of January 1, 2010, the EAR process will kick-off in October 2008, and continue through January 1, 2010. The attached work program identifies the 4 primary tasks, with their related subtasks, programmed over this 15 month period.

The following provides a brief description of the kick-off process for the EAR and each of the primary tasks. The process used will follow the guidance provided by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in the document "Guide to Preparing an Evaluation and Appraisal Report" (March 2004). A copy of this document is attached for information.

### **EAR Kick-Off**

Successful completion of the EAR process requires participation by all County Divisions and involvement of the Zoning and Adjustment Board and Board of County Commissioners.

In October 2008, an overview of the EAR process will be presented at a Monday morning senior staff meeting to make each Division aware of the process and the need for assistance.

In November 2008, Planning will present the EAR process to the Zoning and Adjustment Board and Board of County Commissioners. This presentation will serve two (2) primary purposes:

1. Brief the appointed and elected officials on the importance of the EAR process; and
2. Provide public notice that the EAR process has begun and to encourage public participation and comment.

### **Identify Issues of Local Concern**

Section 163.3191 requires that local governments focus the EAR to issues of local concern. These issues of local concern are significant and specific challenges, needs, or opportunities facing our county. The EAR evaluates how well the adopted comprehensive plan addresses these issues and identifies amendments to the comprehensive plan to address these issues. The issues of local concern should be limited and focused. Typically, issues of local concern do not exceed five (5).

The results of the Sumter 2030 visioning process will be used as a primary tool to identify the issues of local concern. These issues will be finalized with the ZAB and BOCC in December 2008.

DCA recommends the use of a scoping meeting to meet with DCA and other state and regional agencies to review the issues of local concern to obtain their feedback and input. This scoping meeting provides the County the opportunity to hear from these state and regional agencies their perspective on issues for our county and to preempt any surprises that may occur when the EAR is reviewed by these state and regional agencies at the end of the EAR process. The scoping meeting is planned for January 2009.

A letter of understanding with DCA is also recommended. The letter of understanding with DCA allows for DCA to agree to the issues of local concern and prohibits DCA from claiming the adopted EAR is insufficient due to improper identification of the issues. The letter of understanding is planned for January 2009, following the scoping meeting.

### **Statutory Required Analysis**

Although Section 163.3191 requires the focus of the EAR on specific issues of local concern, the Section also mandates the analysis of the following items:

- Evaluate and update population projections – Demonstrate if population projections used in current comprehensive plan were accurate and provide updated population projections to the new horizon year (2030).

- Evaluate changes in land area (annexations) – Describe annexation activity within the county and identify challenges or opportunities as a result of these annexations.
- Vacant Land Development Suitability – Identify vacant lands in the county and its suitability for development.
- Provision of Infrastructure to Meet Growth Needs – Identify how well adopted level of service standards are met for all infrastructure and the financial feasibility of the adopted comprehensive plan.
- Location of Development Consistent with Plan – Identify how well the comprehensive plan anticipated the need and location of land uses within the county.
- Coordination with Water Supply Planning with the Water Management District – Identify how well the comprehensive plan coordinates with the water supply planning efforts of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority.
- Coordination of Land Use and Public School Planning – Identify how well the comprehensive plan is coordinated with the planning of the Sumter County School District.
- Changes to State Law and Rules – Identify changes to Florida Statutes, Florida Administrative Code, and the Withlacoochee Strategic Regional Policy Plan and any changes needed to the County’s comprehensive plan to assure compliance.
- Assess Success/Failures of Each Element – Identify overall significant successes or failures of each of the adopted comprehensive plan elements (Future Land Use, Traffic Circulation, Recreation & Open Space, Utilities, Housing, Conservation, Intergovernmental Coordination, Public Schools, and Capital Improvements)

It is anticipated that the statutory required analysis will occur from November 2008, through May 2009.

### **Issues of Local Concern Analysis**

The bulk of the EAR will be the analysis of the issues of local concern. The analysis requires a specific description of each of the issues, data and analysis to support the issues, evaluation of specific objectives and policies within the comprehensive plan relating to the issues, and recommendations for amendments to the comprehensive plan to address the issues. It is anticipated this analysis will occur from February 2009, through July 2009. This timeframe may adjust depending upon the number and nature of the issues of local concern identified.

## **EAR Review and Adoption**

The EAR will require internal review as well as public hearings with the ZAB and BOCC prior to adoption. The following provides a summary of the EAR review and adoption process:

- Internal EAR Review – In July 2009, the draft EAR will be ready for internal review by County Divisions and County Administration.
- ZAB Draft EAR Review – In August 2009, the ZAB will hold a public hearing, as the Local Planning Agency, to recommend approval of the EAR to the BOCC.
- BOCC Draft EAR Review – In September 2009, the BOCC will hold a public hearing to consider approving the draft EAR for submittal to DCA for comment.
- Submit Draft EAR to DCA - The draft EAR must be submitted to DCA no later than 90 days prior to the adoption date. Consequently, the draft EAR must be submitted to DCA by October 1, 2009.
- Revise Draft EAR – The draft EAR will be revised to address comments from DCA. The revisions will occur in November and December 2009.
- BOCC Adopt EAR – In December 2009, the BOCC must hold a public hearing to adopt the EAR. The EAR must be adopted by January 1, 2010. If the EAR is not adopted by January 1, 2010, the County may not adopt any amendments to the comprehensive plan until the EAR is adopted.
- Progress Reports – Starting in November 2009, a monthly progress report will be provided to County Administration. This progress report will document the completion of require tasks, identify resources or information needed, and identify challenges or opportunities with the EAR process. This progress report can be provided to the BOCC and ZAB to keep them informed and provide opportunity for comment as the process proceeds over the next 15 months.

## **After Adoption of the EAR**

After the adoption of the EAR, DCA will review and find the EAR either “sufficient” or “insufficient”. If the EAR is found “insufficient”, then DCA will identify the areas requiring additional analysis or correction and the County must revise the EAR. If the EAR is found “sufficient”, then the County has 18 months from the date of “sufficiency” to adopt amendments to the Sumter County Comprehensive Plan based on the recommendations of the EAR.